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1920

AUTUMN LEAVES

URIEL PIDUCH



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AUTUMN LEAVES

BY
URIEL PIDUCH
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BOSTON
RICHARD G. BADGER
THE GORHAM PRESS

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PS3531
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1920

Made in the United States of America

The Gorham Press, Boston, U. S. A.

AUG 26 1920

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CH
A Master Great there is that all His spirits
taught,
And tuned all human hearts to His grand
harmony;
The elements of Nature tuned He like a
harp,—
And hurling o'er them storms and gales and
thunderbolts,
Still sings His Great Song soft and diapason-
like.
Mankind,—alas! heeds not its blithesome,
mellow theme.

—From the Polish of Adam Mickiewicz.

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AUTUMN LEAVES

DAWN

From out of the poppy-fretted gates of Night,
O'er heaps of drowsy clouds that floating,
 dream,
She comes, the comely, graceful, smiling,
 sweet;
The blushing, star-eyed goddess—nude and
 pure,
A lily in her naked innocence.
She comes to wake the sleeping violets,
To breathe her soul on dreaming brooks, to
 greet
The waking world that slumb'ring, danger
 fears.

She wakes the morning glory with her
 breath,
And sips its silver chalice's nectared dew.
The climbing jasmine that forgotten, slept
In sweet repose on the willow's snowy
 breast,
Awoke to kiss her golden magic wand
And smiled to see his mother passing by . . .

She stoops to kiss the lily of the vale;
And whispering hope and love, she hies
 away.

She wakes the dreaming birds that timid hide
In high and leafy castles on trees that swing
And rock their playful young to blessed rest.

The streams awake and follow in a race
Their youthful queen o'er pebbles, twigs, cas-
cades,
To touch her graceful foot, her roseate veil
That trailing falls on their liquid heaving
breasts.

She skips with grace and charm o'er slum-
b'ring meads
And o'er them leads her beauteous sister
Hours
In song and dance that through the waking
woods
Distinctly echo—cheer and youth and love . .

She claps her lily hands and calls to wake
Her truant zephyrs hiding through the night
In distant alcoves on the mountain sides.
They leave their balmy cloisters bright,
And dip their smiling faces in the stream;
Then out they come, once more the sportive
sprites,
And strike with tiny golden fingers five,
New chords of cheer on th' airy harps of
trees.

She wakes the sleeping child and aged man,
To greet the fresh and warm returning Day.
She flits through village, town, and lone
chateau,
And enters unseen the village belfry white
To wake the mute and somber angelus bell.

She hies once more through all the universe:
The gleeful birds and trees and nature all
Sweet music make—a harmony divine
That echoes deep in suffering human hearts.

She smiles again her angel-mother's smile,
Then bids farewell to all, and longingly
She sinks with smiles in the fond embrace
Of truant Love—the bright and beauteous
Day.

THE HEART OF A FRIEND

The stars that shine on clear and moon-less
nights,

And gaze on space, its silent, phantom
strands;

The stars that wink and twinkle on the
heights,

And gayly clap their little snowy hands;

The stars that climb the airy, phantom stairs
Of Nothingness, and skipping, hum their
morning rimes

To some sweet star that lightens life's long
cares,

And plays to them Diana's golden chimes;
The stars that were, but now are sparkless,
dead;

The stars that are, the twinklers near and
far;

The stars that know not yet their life's sole
mark;

All bow before one gleaming silver star . . .

A star whose beams are lilies fragrant, pure,
A star whose radiance nothing can obscure.

I know that star, with her my love I blend,
This star I ever call—the Heart of a Friend.

TO THE RIVER DELAWARE

(A Sonnet)

Once more, celestial stream, my pilgrim eyes,
Behold thee in thy former cherished form!
Once more a friendly heaven o'er thee flies,
And on thy bosom, spotless, free from storm,
Reflected I behold the bygone days
That sleep forever on thy verdant shore . . .
They gleam upon my soul as noonday rays,
And beckon sad farewells forevermore.
The sunclad ripples on thy bosom sleep
And smile in dreams of joy on distant seas;
They sing of hope to me and—bid me weep.
For me there bloom not fragrant, singing
leas.

I dream of thee, not knowing what to say,
I greet thee, blessed Lethe, far, far away.

Philadelphia, January 2, 1916.

THE APOTHEOSIS

I sing of bards that lived and died
By man rejected and despised;
By man that curse for kindness gives;
By man that never realized,
That in a bard God's genius lives.
I sing of bards, the deified.

One morning bright at break of day,
A youth was walking on the shore,
O'er heaps of pebbles, pearls, and clay,
And listened to the bell'wing roar
Of seas that roared far, far away.

Fatigued, to rest his head he laid
Beneath a patriarchal oak.
Thus in the monarch's quiv'ring shade,
Repose to him her secrets broke . . .
He slept in Sleep's refreshing glade.

Then Orpheus from his domain
Descended o'er the sleeping youth,
And led his spirit through a lane,
Unto the fount of blessed Truth,
Where Wisdom, Genius ever reign.

They stopped. The god took by his hand
The youth and spoke in accents kind:
"Thou art on Beauty's favorite strand,
'Mid lanes with fragrant lilies lined,
And hyacinths from Cynthia's land.

This fount before thee calmly flows
And falls o'er pebbles white and pure.
Each pebble's essence no one knows,
Nor gods of this are ever sure
In which the brightest flamelet glows.

The night is calm, the moon shines bright;
I will now give the fountain rest.
And if thou wisheth, youthful guest,
To live a life of sweet delight,
Excite thy soul to fervent zest.

Here Silence reigns.—Thou art alone.
Do enter now this pebbly nest
And choose thy blessed favorite stone,
Of millions one, by thy mind blest.
Select one, bless it, make thine own."

The youth perplexed now deeply thinks
O'er choosing joy or gloom for life.
His quiv'ring hand from choosing shrinks,
And in his soul there burns a strife
In which now Hope then Sadness sinks.

The god looked on his youthful friend,
And smiled upon his charming face.
He saw his noble spirit bend
To blot out doubts and to erase
All fear that might him sadness lend.

At last the youth unto the fount
Approaches happy, smiling, gay.
His hand begins the stones to count,
When one bright pebble seemed to say:
"To Fame will I aid thee to mount!"

"For Fame I look not, creature bold . . .
For honest life I yearn, desire!
A charm in thee I now behold
And warmth as that of Hades' fire . . .
My friendship will I with thee hold."

With eager grasp the stone embrace
Five gentle snowy fingers white.
Returning with a dryad's pace,
To Orpheus he smiles delight,
And opes to him his fingers' case.

Unto the youth's inquiring look,
The anxious god these words addressed:
"Thy life thou hast in that pearl's book;
Preserve it, keep it next thy breast,
And be not sad nor sadness brook.

Now let us hie to yonder stream.
A secret shall I there disclose,
Before the crimson morning gleam
Shall break the sweetness of repose,
. . . The pleasure of thy pleasant dream."

On one green mount of Helicon,
Beneath the heaven's canopy,
Where streams rejoice and races run,
There, hiding in a woodland's sea,
Proud stands the palace of the Sun.

Beneath its marble portico,
'Mid marble pillars stately, white,
Around which jasmines winding grow
And bathe in Morning's sunshine bright,
Two souls were pacing to and fro.

A godlike figure and—a boy.
In sadness both were silence keeping.
The god's bright face soon smiled in joy,
The youth aside, was sadly weeping
As if his soul were burden's toy.

A string of moments passed away . . .
The god at last his guest consoles:
"Weep not, thou child of worldwide lay.
An ocean's fury o'er thee rolls
But cannot Nature's word gainsay.

Thy heart now throbs with purer love,
And loves more warmly than before;
Thy soul is like a peaceful dove
That flies to heaven's golden door
And Peace to man brings from above.

Thy heart now feels and comprehends
More keenly Nature's varying mood.
Soon smiles shall come from lips of friends,
Then tears from their ingratitude,
For—human love too often bends . . .

The plaintive, mournful moan of winds,
The flight of distant snowflake clouds,
The songs of birds, the brook that winds
Beneath the woodland's swinging shrouds,
Of heaven speaks to poets' minds.

Thou art a bard. Thy soul is crowned
With radiance never to be marred.
Thy genius never shall be bound
By clouds of sadness floating 'round;
Thou art to be thy nation's bard . . .

When I did sound this note of cheer
To thee in yonder blooming vale,
There crept o'er thee a thrill of fear,
A frightful gust, a Libyan gale,
And in thy orbs I saw a tear.

Weep not, thou bard of Olymp born!
Though sadness might thee overpower,
And in thy breast there burn a thorn,
Thy soul shall ever be a flower,
Of wise, the love,—of FOOLS, the scorn.

Thy heart is beating with emotion.
We shall now hie to yonder palace,
And there with love and true devotion,
Accept from me a golden chalice,
And drink its magic crystal potion."

The youth complied with this behest,
And drank the chalice's crystal draught.
His soul's bright eyes from sleepless rest
Were opened by the potion's waft,
And searched for truth on Wisdom's crest.

His heart now throbbed in accents strong;
His spirit yearned for woods secluded;
The thundering world, its senseless throng
Could nevermore hold him eluded,
Whose songs to heaven now belong.

The host again in accents kind
Consoled his guest: "Let honest cheer
Thy bonds of genius now unbind.
Be frank and teach with godly fear,
Console the sad and lead the blind.

Awake now, bard, to human bliss;
Return to sad humanity. . . .
Thy brow allow a god to kiss,
For in thy breast true love I see,
And on thy brow—divinity.

Autumn Leaves

Return to man through yonder lane,
Then o'er the bridge that spans the dell
To yon old oak, the Muse's fane,
And there awake. . . .Oh, bard, farewell,
Farewell, until we meet again."

'Twas midnight. . . .

 Wrapped in silent gloom,
O'er sleeping earth it spread its shroud.
From out the ocean's restless womb,
Wild storms and winds were roaring loud
As if they shrieked their dismal doom.

From out the yawning, foaming Deep,
They rushed o'er mute and dreaming shores;
O'er hills and woods they wildly leap
And bend the oak that peace implores
From Nature for the youth asleep. . . .

The youth awoke,—a child no more,
And deeply sighed for Orpheus gone.
But all was vanished. . . .

 Now a wild,
Mad storm has rolled o'er Nature's lawn
On which he dreamed a vision mild.

The storm still raged; and on the shore
The poet walked in thought profound.
His quiv'ring lips commenced to pour
From Genius' fount, the free, unbound,
Sweet words that live forevermore. . . .

The poet sighed; his poem ended.
His first-born numbers pure and sweet,
When o'er the sea a hush descended.
The waves now calm, by peace befriended,
With rev'rence kissed the poet's feet.

A treble score of years had passed,
And laid their bones in Time's cold tomb;
A treble million souls had cast
Their weeping eyes on distant Past,
And—vanished in eternal gloom. . . .

Three score of horrid years their flight
Have winged on Time's fast fleeting wings;
Three million souls like shades of Night
Have left their hearths and crowns of kings
To deck their brows with thorns of blight. . .

Three score of silent years have fled
And died to speak with Man no more;
Three million hearts to death have bled,
And drenched with blood Time's skull-strewn
shore,
'Mid moan of waves and wails of dead. . . .

The sun still shines, the moon still sails
O'er heaven's quiv'ring starry heaps;
The wind its fortune still bewails
To one old bard that vigil keeps
Beneath his cross, and kneeling, weeps.

The day was waning o'er the seas.
The sky was dark, the seas pale red,
And evening came when voices fled,
Disturbed by nought except a breeze
That hummed its requiem to the dead.

Thus in the twilight's dying beams
The poet knelt beneath his cross.
His life's sweet song, his youthful dreams
Were now to him a painful loss
That sin rejects and death redeems.

O'er Life's bleak track his thorny path
He walked but slowly 'mid the jeers
Of senseless throngs that mocked God's
 wrath,
And mocking hugged their icy biers,
To melt the ice with burning tears.

.
.

The bard was dying in his glade.
He bowed his head, but ere he died,
He gazed upon his cross of jade
And kissed his Christ, the Crucified;
Then closed his eyes, and weeping sighed:
"Why hast Thou me a poet made?"

GOD'S FLOWERS

Twilight waned and vanished pale,
And o'er the Alps, night's hoary pall
Floated grave, ill-boding, dark,
As horrid Sleep had silenced all.

No lights then glared on Zermatt's lanes;
No echoes woke the sleeping jay;
No winds then dared to moan their pains,
As grave-like Silence held her sway.

Sombre midnight fast approached.
The village hearths were dying slowly;
The gleaming windows closed their eyes,
And parting bells were tolling lowly.

Then from the skies a radiant light,
Slowly o'er the Alps descended.
On to Zermatt, to a cottage
Its starry path it slowly wended.

By the cold and dying embers,
In the candle's pallid glare,
O'er her dying infant's cradle,
Watched a mother, weeping there.

Whispering words of love's devotion,
She her infant thus caressed:
"O wilt thou, dearest, leave thy mother?
Leave this cradle by thee blest?"

Wilt thou not, my beauteous angel
Live to learn thy mother's name?
Wilt thou leave thy weeping father,
Thou star of Hope, thou Heaven's claim?"

The child awoke. A smile serene
And angel-like beamed from its features.
"Mother, look," it whispered lowly,
"Look, they come, God's lovely creatures."

Then with a mother's fond embrace
Her babe she tightly to her pressed.
And weeping tears of fondest parting,
Again her infant she caressed.

But lo, before the dying embers,
A figure standing, dazzling, white!
It smiles to both, the child and mother
And speaks its message from the Height:

"The God Who is your souls' possessor,
Speaks to thee this hour, oh, mother.
Thy child, thy treasure is not dying,
But lives fore'er a Heaven's brother.

The Lord on High will banquet hold;
And flowers will His tables deck.
He calls for this, thy lily sweet;
The flow'ret clinging to thy neck.

Tonight o'er Heaven's vast expanse,
Thy lily shall I with me lead.
Accept, kind mother, from an angel,
This splendid flow'ret, Eden's reed."

The mother's heart in consternation,
Throbs with sorrow and with fear;
And in her eyes, the pure and holy,
Gleams a mother's parting tear.

She lifts her tearful, glistening eyes,
And humbly bows her humble head;
The vision vanished into night,
Her babe she found but—soul-less, dead . . .

On Zermatt's hill in flowers clad,
Where hundreds sleep in heaven's bliss,
A grave I found among the graves.
—I wept and blessed it with a kiss.

For there lies buried mother's love,
A mother's tears, heroic deed.
Beneath the cross with sunshine crowned,
Still blooms the angel's slender reed.

Ah, not for this I kneel there weeping,
That there sleeps a—Heaven's brother;
Yea, more than this. In that grave lying,
Sleep an angel and my—mother.

Buffalo, New York,
May 2, 1917.

LINES TO MY FRIEND

A. P.

O youthful bard, to whom was given
To ope the golden gates of Heaven,
Thy genius soars to Heaven's domes
And there unlocks eternity's tomes—
Time-worn, dust-covered, still new, ever
new.

To few 'twas given, friend, to few,
To sing immortal songs of Poesy
For those who wish God's truth to see,
And those who seek to be consoled
By rimes that roll as ever rolled
The silver waters of the limpid Lethe.

My Friend, today I bless and greet thee!
Thy rime shall live, Immortal Rime,
As long as lives Old Father Time;
And after Time has left his throne,
They still shall live—in God alone.

Buffalo, New York,
January 1, 1919.

HIS LOVE

How oft the restless crowd I fly
To dream the dreams to me so dear:
How oft I wish with longing sigh
That His good Heart were near me, near!

Oh, then with awe my heart oft strives
That Love divine to compass well
From which our heart its love derives:—
But this Love's bounds no lips can tell.

I feel I'm near the lov-ed one
Whose burning Heart's enkindling glow
Surpasses the eternal sun:—
Its depths no one can ever know.

This Love of His benignant Heart
He gives me for my earthly way
That I may keep from sin apart
And live with him for aye and aye.

MA CHERIE

TO JOSEPHINE

Of all the dreams that come to view
Of mortal eyes that tight asleep,
Gaze thru Dream's vales, the soulful, deep,
The sweetest is my dream of you,
My heart's sole angel—Ma Cherie!

When at the silent close of day
Sweet nightfall greets the weary earth,
When evening zephyrs far away
Begin to hum their airs of mirth,
And sing of you, ah,—Ma Cherie,

My heart feels lonely, lonely, dear.
I watch the stars high in the skies
And wait until you may appear
To close my weary, longing eyes
In dreams of you, ah,—Ma Cherie!

Across the long and weary miles
That separate our loving hearts,
I see your eyes, your angel smiles
That strike my soul like sweetly darts,
And music make of—Ma Cherie!

Your eyes then gleam like stars above;
Your smile is dearly fond and true;
Your lips breathe nought but truest love—
My arms then seek for nought but you,
Thru mists of dreams for—Ma Cherie!

Ah, then all seems so gay and bright!
All glaring pure and mild and fair!
On me then gleams a sweeter light—
I sigh with joy for you are there
For me to kiss you—Ma Cherie!

'Tis sweet to dream such dreams as this;
For though you are from me so far,
You are fore'er my dreams' bright star.
Then all that seems, is heaven's bliss,
For you and me, ah,—Ma Cherie!

Where'er I roam within my dream:
O'er verdant leas or rocking sea,
You are fore'er my guiding beam,
That's why I call you Ma Cherie,
My heart's fair princess—Ma Cherie!

Each dream of you, sweet Josephine,
Is e'er a moment spent with you.
Ah, blissful time of golden sheen—
Each dream of you, sweetheart, of you,
I dream forever—Ma Cherie!

My heart then throbs contented, dear.
My breast then bears a breast divine;
Then silver moments gold appear,
For then I'm yours and you are mine,
And thus forever—Ma Cherie!

Ebenezer, New York,
December 29, 1918.

THRENODIA

‘Ο πλουτοςεἶ γε χρυσοῦ
τὸ ζῆν παρεῖχε θνητοῖς,
ἐκατέρουν φυλλάσων,
ἴν’, ἀνθάνατος ἐπέλθῃ,
λάβῃ τι, καὶ παρέλθῃ.

κ. τ. λ. *Anacreon.*

Out of the Deep, my Soul, out of the Deep,
Out of the silent, hollow Deep,
Where both so often we did weep,
And where bleak storms, that howling creep
On ebon wings, and o’er the meadows sweep
Into a nameless and chaotic heap
Soft and sweet scented blossoms that long
ago,
Gayly floated o’er Life’s bright, sparkling
main,
But now are gone, ah, ne’er to blow
On maidens’ cheeks, ah, ne’er, ah, ne’er
again. . . .

Out of the Deep above the hazy universe
Where planets roll and roles rehearse
To meet their Maker on that mortal day
When nought shall breathe nor nought say
—nay,
We soar, my tearful Soul, no more
To view with tear-dimmed eyes the shore
Whose sands our names once bore, to be

But washed and buried in eternity . . .
See'st thou the clouds? . . .

They totter, sink and wane
Below us as we mount the starry main.
Far, far below they sink,—they are no more;
The last appears and drops from heaven's
door.

The clouds are passed. Behold the distant
light!

An orb titanic, burning, whirling bright.
Its rays escape and clasping with one hand
Their parent, with the other greet a land
That far, unseen and straying unconsolated,
Accosts the stranger warmth with joy untold.

Still higher mount, my Soul, where mem-
phian night
Shall drench thy every quivering thought
that might

Thy buoyant breast with squalls o'ersweep,
And tears portend to eyes that long did weep.

What ebon gloom this empty void o'erfills!

The clouds below
Seem like distant purple hills
With pallid crimson rills
Of fresh fallen snow. . . .

My spirit soars and feels the power of a god,
As trailing paths by mortals still untrod,

Far out I see the palpitating universe
Entombed in clouds that roaring, hearse
Gigantic worlds in palls of storms and gloom.
The whirling planets, God's holy Rosary,
Crowned with cloudy garlands o'er a phan-
tom sea

Of silence revolve around their Lord
Whom infinite eternity fore'er adored;
Fore'er their fallow faces they slowly turn,
Fore'er their breasts in silent adoration burn;
Thus in an ordered, never-ending race
They fly adoring mutely on thru space.
In each returning flight they bend their knee,
And in their artless, mortal solemnity,
They bow before his glaring majesty. . . .
Of worlds composed, this whirling world
By God Almighty into motion hurled,
Rolls on around their sun's bright, dazzling
throne,

And flies with him to distances unknown. . .
How cold my spirit feels. . . .

A sorrow's biting cold
Envelopes my soul with a serpent's hold,
As with my weeping eyes I behold
Drenched with night whose blackness noth-
ing mars,

Eternal Silence, upon whose throbless breast
Forgotten ghosts, condemned to pain, unrest,
Like lightning tear the reigning gloom,
Hyeing from tomb to tomb,
And painfully moaning, they gaze above
In quest of hearts they could but would not
love.

Fore'er they wander nomads saddened, broken-
 enhearted,
Longing for souls that long departed,
Have changed their rosy forms to twinkling
 stars,
That point their dazzling fingers thru a soul-
 less sea,
And trace on Space—to God, Infinity.
I feel their warmth! Arise, my Soul, forget
Thy present frigidness and youth's regret.
I rise. . . . I feel within my breast a might
Whose nod will turn a million suns to darkest
 night!

 Ah, my power now expands
O'er Time's cold and lifeless strands;
I rise, and far below I see the Past;
I see its silent years, the First, the Last. . . .
From out their graves they stretch their
 withered hands
In search of crowns, their shortlived deo-
 dands.
One million tombs; two millions quivering
 arms
Now beg to bless forgotten youthful charms.

 'Mid hollow tombs with death
 Replete and death's chilled breath,
Softly blowing thru the withering asphodels.
I feel the warmth of a bygone love,
Of hearts that passed to shine above
On a heart whose spirit with them dwells.

Here nothing can this warmth retake,
And here I shall my thanatopsis make . .
A thanatopsis of what life seems
To be when Youth's warm eye gleams
With lucid stars that gaze from above
And twinkle their sweet song of love, love,
love.

Portrait of Vanity!

Love!

Life of Mortality!

Love!

Thou fleeting phantom bedecked
With luring vestments' mighty glare!
Thou in the darkness of the night
Shinest o'er the waves of Care,
That slowly rolling to and fro,
Embrace the wrecks of hearts below. . .

But thou art blessed, almighty Love!
For thou'rt the essence of the Dove;
Eternal God, Eternal Love, Eternal Light;
Weakness all, still infinite Might.
Of Him, with Him, in Him—infinately fair;
His share, thy share,
Tho we know not how, when and where.
Thou art blessed Love, thou Spirit frail,
divine,
Fore'er to gleam o'er the earth's cold, billowy
brine.

Oh, blessed Youth, thou King of Thought!
Thou might sublime that wonders wrought
When hearts were throbbing ambitious, free,
And carefree breasts were anxious, true,
When wond'rous Muse, sweet Liberty
Beckoned them with smiles to woo
A lovely goddess, Love ethereal,
 That on her lily wings
Came down to bless youths' hearts and light
Therein the flickering might,
 Instilled in mortal hearts tho from above—
Love, love, holy love.

Forsaking laurels, crowns imperial,
Lustful Power's cold embrace,
They left the earth putrid, false and hollow;
They left, sweet Love fore'er to follow
In a sweet and indolent race,
Thru lanes of lilies, jonquils, roses sweet,
O'er brooks that hummed their songs replete
 With Freedom's salutary breath.

They followed slowly on and on,
Thru thorns and thistles, until, until,
Until they gained the hazy distant hill;
—Until Life's victory was won!

With such true and glorious liberty,
Noble youth and maiden pure;
He herculean, she angelic and demure,
Both respectful and obeying,

Were led to Heaven's golden portal,
Unto their God, the Free, Immortal,
To drink of His chalice of Immortality. . .

Youth erred; 'tis true;
Oft it dared

When life seemed changing, ever new,
Too much for its soul's achieving powers;
And oft it rushed as tho it fared
On wings of zephyrs that unimpaired,
Drenched the violets with cooling showers.

Youth sped smiling hither and thither,
In quest of food for a hungry soul.
Its golden goal seemed vague and far,
Faintly gleaming like some distant star. . . .

Youth stopped, and sadly asked: Ah, whither
I high?—unto an unseen and hazy goal?

The green waves of the distant ocean
Danced luring to Youth's ambitious eyes.

How great 'twould be,
If my eyes could see

The unfathomable gulfs in frenzied commo-
tion!

To dwell for a moment on the ocean's pearly
floor,

—To love my lorelei forevermore. . . .

Youth oft has erred. . . .

Error oft has swept

Its tender soul's weak silver wings
With sharp, half-poisonous stings.

But Youth regretted. Youth has wept
O'er sad defeats of a sadder strife,
That was a child of an unknown life,
And safe returned thru all the rage
Of nature's storms and snows and rains
Unto the side of some old sage—
Who lists to these, he ever gains.

Now gushing,
Then hushing,
Forever rushing;

Ah, what is Life?

A turbulent stream,
That slowly flowing along,
Hums its sweet melodious song,
Like monks of Old, when in a silent nook,
Spake they their vespers from a fray-ed
book.

From morn till night
It sings its minors and its trebles;
Life is joy and Life is sorrow,
Never sure of a joyful morrow—
God, tho I cannot see,
Thus it needs be

As the sweetest rose has its prickly thorn;
The maiden's song its pathos and lark-like
trebles;
Life cannot be of all sorrows shorn,
For where, ah where is the stream without
its pebbles?

Autumn Leaves

Man sails unmindful in his airy bark,
O'er this pebbly Stream.
To him unreal is the singing meadow lark,
And the bitterest pains,—ah, they only seem!

When at the end of Life's sweet day,
The swinging tide of Hope has ebbd away
And left to greet and kiss once more,
Its bright and resplendent shore,
Where Youth's sweet songs, the woodland
melodies
Have changed to sweeter but, bygone mem-
ories;—

When Life's warm sun sinks toward the
West,
And leaves its dying ray in a sobbing breast,
Ah, then one thought would heaven be—
If only blessed by dear Reality;
That Youth and Love and Music, Poesy,
Would be with him for all eternity. . . .

Ah, he who roamed carefree a youth,
With eyes half conscious to words of
Truth,
Now with a brow grief-marked with sor-
row,
And pallid lips with no smile for the mor-
row,
Kneels before Him Who never dies;
And sadly smiling thru his tear-dimmed
eyes,

Autumn Leaves

Glistening with bitter tears of care,
Whispers his hopeful evening pray'r:

Oh, withered blossoms, fading memories,
That burn my breast

As each sad threne from out the breeze
Comes with th' autumnal songs of trees,
And melts once more from out their rest
—Tears, I deemed were there no more.

Thou weapest, Soul, e'en tho in thine own
Sweet kingdom, this peaceful, quiet strand;
The fines of space where nought is blown
By the world's ill-willed and blood stained
hand.

We are alone,—far from the world!

My Soul, fear not, thou art immortal;
Man's nobler breath, a spirit half dependent,
Still nobler, greater than all grace resplendent.

And this, man shall remember
Fore'er on earth, until
Mortal Life's last dying ember
Shall fill, ah, sweetly fill
With cheer the chilled hearth of
Death.

E'en though we sing our verse of gloom,
Of memories sad and a sadder tomb,
That many build with conscious tears,
On the airy shelves of their fleeting years,

It will bring forth Love's silver tear
That will in our bosom disappear
To tell in numbers of pure content
The life well lived, in goodness spent;
A song of honest, true endeavor,
That must relume its soul forever

My humble song,
Tedious and long
Is ended, Soul, and souls that with me be
Peruse, but weep not,—I end my threnody.

THE POET'S DREAM

REVERIE APRES LE BAL

"When most I wink, then do my eyes best
see,
For all the day they view things unre-
spected."

Shakespeare.

Think not, sweet girl, that from mine eye,
Beamed words 'pon which you should rely.
Deem not, sweet Jane, that poets' eyes
Always gleam true from their blue skies . . .

A poet's eye
Is like the sky;

The deeper its hue, the thinner its haze,
The fonder the hope of bright future days,

But—it's this fonder hope that smilingly
showers

Life's cheer and its pleasures upon woodland
flowers,

Until—it even their life overpowers. . . .

So—

Beware little girl, or numbered are thy hours.

I winked, 'tis true; but hark little girl:

The sight of thy face, its deep and solemn
beauty,

As if obeying their secret duty,

Grasped my mind into a sudden whirl

Thy voice was full of tenderness;

Thy glance was nought but gentleness;

And that wistful turn of thy upper lip;

Thy snow-white arm resting on thy hip,—

Bent even a poet unto admiration!

My lips have sighed their aspiration

To thee, sweet, blushing rose divine,

And wished that its echo would be—only
thine.

Other hearts have sighed theirs too.

But somehow, Jane, you did not care

For sighs from "strangers" who cared to woo

The dazzling starlet whose soul was—you!

Dear heart, my unknown Maiden fair

I also am a stranger, and sadly so!

But who knows,

Maybe your smile that seemed like a fresh
blooming rose,

Autumn Leaves

And your sweet face, your ebon, childlike
eyes,
Were dreams that I begged from yon moonlit
skies . . .

Though you and I perhaps forever,
Have parted ne'er to meet again,
Believe, sweet girl, I shall endeavor
To view once more thy beauty's fane.

We are "mere friends" to you may seem
Bitter, and gloom to your heart portend,
But if some day these lines perchance
Should rest beneath your eyes' warm glance,
When leisurely dreaming in some quiet nook,
Listening to nought but the song of the
brook,
And reading with angels from thy youth's
Book,
Ah, then turn back a page or two,
And think of our sweet though unuttered
adieu,
That lives forever, forever to weave
My dreams of you . . .

Sweet Jane, believe,
That you are not only a poet's "mere friend,"
Nay more, you're forever a "mere poet's"
dream!

Buffalo, N. Y.,
October, 1918.

MOTHER

A brilliant star shone from the skies,
When love's first gleaming beamed to pour
O'er me from Mother's watchful eyes
The care that in her heart she bore.

The dreary nights, the many hours
She hummed to me her lullabies,
Still bloom for me like living flowers
And speak to me of paradise.

Like distant echoes from the past
Come visions bright of long ago
To sigh with me unto the last,
To sigh with me where'er I go.

How dear her happy, smiling eyes!
How dear her sweet, angelic voice!
To live near her was paradise.
Ah! then I lived but to rejoice.

But now—when gone are Mother's eyes,
Her tender voice, her loving heart,
My tear-dimmed eyes gaze to the skies:
For there I'll go—there ne'er to part.

'Tis night; from 'neath the starry dome
I hear a voice; my Mother's call.
O Mother! take me to thy home;
Must I dwell here 'neath Death's cold pall?

Beneath the cross I vigil keep—
A weeping pilgrim and unknown.
For thee I long and weep and weep;
But, Mother dear, I weep alone.

A FAREWELL IMPROMPTU

To my friends A. P., E. S. W., G. W.

"Flebilis indignos, Elegia, nunc solve capillos;
Ah! nimis ex vero nunc tibi nomen erit."
Ovid.

Oh, that I could behold once more,
Youth's scenes, the flitting dreams of yore!
Oh, that I could but see the shore
To which the hours of Youth have fled,
And echoed back:—"Forever . . . dead.
Each hour that's fled . . . forever—dead."

Oh, that I could on Fancy's pinions,
Flit but once more o'er Mem'ry's fields,
And play once more in Dream's dominions
Where pain to pleasure ever yields—

We would once more; ah, you and I,
Like aerial beings from the sky
Review again the hills and vales
That spun for us their runic tales;

We would once more the paths retrace,
Of pleasant strolls through Nature's grace,
O'er leaves of gold that moaned in gloom,
Their funeral dirge o'er Summer's tomb.

We would resing our simple tunes
That breathing snow like Vikings' runes,
Their chilly wings o'er us did spread,
And filled our souls with Night's chilled
dread;

Thus guiding us, like Hope's bright mast—
But Friends, 'tis silent past' . . .
And buried deep in our love's lore.
Here let my song its sorrows pour
O'er Youth's dear tomb, its glittering cross,
Its blooming flowers, fragrant moss.

I kiss the lilies fragrant, fair;
I kiss the rose untouched by care;
I bless the whisp'rings blooming there.

'Tis here we stop, my dearest Friends,
For here our path its arms now bends
To future bright on every side . . .
Here let me weep, my dearest Friends,
For here, ah, here,—our roads divide.

We look with joy to our Past:
A glaring sky of thousand pleasures!
The happy days, though pale and ghast,
Flit o'er our Mem'ry's jewelled sea,
And sink therein like heaven's treasures,
To lead us to—Eternity.

The evening walks 'mid dreaming trees;
The morning strolls o'er dewy leas;
The river banks, the skimming stone;
The sweetest songs by zephyrs blown,
Shall live fore'er—in dreams alone.'

In bliss we breathed the thousand joys,
'Neath Youth's bright sun, from first to last.
Though Time has blown its serious blast,
We loved too well our youthful Past,
And hence we'll be—FOREVER BOYS!

With these sweet thoughts and memories
 dear,

I wish your hearts Life's brightest cheer.
I press your hands still warm and true;
I see your souls as ne'er before . . .
But we must part—

 Dear Friends, Adieu.

I'm going far, my Friends, away,

.

I cast mine eyes on Hudson's skies:
There—in the Deep its valley lies.
An angel's veil, long, blue with dyes
That gleam like stars in angels' eyes . . .

.

They're growing bright, our days of yore;
And Memory smiles her smile once more,
As in her arms through Space I rise
To live with her in paradise . . .

I feel its peace, its soothing spell.

'Tis mist that comes . . .

Here spirits dwell.

I'm far away, so Friends,—farewell;

From Far Away,

One,

Long,

Farewell . . .

Rensselaer, New York,

January 28, 1918.

LONG, LONG AGO

Lines written under a picture.

Oh, look not at me with those blue, liquid
eyes

That float in thy sky of azure-like blue;

Their astral resemblance reminds me of
skies,

Whose lanes we traversed when our love
was still true;

Ah, long, long ago.

Oh, wake not that smile whose radiance, I
thought,

Nay even believed of heaven was born.

Today, I but know—too dearly I've bought

The smile that implanted in my heart a
thorn;

Ah, long, long ago.

Oh, look not at me with thy clear, limpid
eyes . . .

Each gleam from thine orbs extracts bitter
tears

And pangs from a heart that ne'er could de-
spise

The scenes of our loving, but still them
reveres

As long, long ago.

Oh, pain me no more with thy naiad-like
smile,

That once on my soul, grief-burdened did
pour

Warm rays of a love that was nought but a—
wile;

Oh, smile not to me for thy smile speaks of
yore,

Of long, long ago.

Oh, speak not to me with thy lips, the divine,
Whose kiss,—ah, in vain to forget I en-
deavor.

Thy roseate lips once impressed upon mine,
Left Mem'ry and thee C—— enshrined
there forever;

Ah, long, long ago.

TO MISS SUNSHINE

On beauteous mornings when I wake,
Out through the lattice long I gaze
To greet the light of dawning Day,
And watch it smiling through the haze.

I feel its warmth,—I feel its pow'r;
I feel the mystery of its smile;
I linger long within its rays,
And prize as gold each passing while.

On gloomy morns, when at daybreak,
I wake to find no morning sun,
I tread as e'er my lonely path,
With cheer I tread it on and on,

Not knowing why—though someone knows
That soon I'll greet—from other skies
A light that gleams where'er it goes:
—Sunshine, the sunshine of your eyes.

MY DREAM OF SPAIN

Night, night, under my feeble light,
I see thee smile thy smile of Spain,
That knowing not the gloom of night,
Can never faint and never wane.

Thy Spanish dress, thy lovely beads
Around thy snowy neck o'erhung,
Are all that Spanish maidens need,
To make them queens by poets sung.

But thou art more, nay far, far more!
And I unworthy of thy gaze.
And though I know not Spanish ways,
I know the hearts my heaven bore.

Thy smile betrays a friendly soul;
Thine eyes the purest heart foretell;
Thy voice whose notes I heard not roll,
I know is like the sweetest bell.

Oh, oh, turn not thy face away,
To yon sweet twinkler, heaven's star.
I wished not, queen, to spoil thy play;
Drop not thy silenced, sweet guitar.

I love thy music, blushing Maid . . .
I've seen the world's bright minds of Art;
I've heard the chords by mortals made—
Give me the music of thy heart.

Oh, draw once more, ah, but once more
Thy anxious fingers to the strain,
As thou did'st play on eves before,
—Within my dreams of sunny Spain.

Oh, play once more thy minuet,
That wakes the world from its drear mart,
That gives the stars their pirouette:
Oh, play the music of Spain's heart.

And I shall listen, now, all night,
Through all my days when I can dream
Of thee, my queen, my own delight;
—For this thine eyes unto me seem.

“Stranger, friend of friendly tone,
Strange words from stranger lips I hear;
Whence art thou, friend, in Spain alone?
Art thou a man that knows not fear?

I know not man, and man's own ways,
I know not man's unresting mind.
But friend, I fear that man betrays
Oft friends that were to him so kind.”

Oh, queen, I fear not man's own ways,
The smiles of Fortune, its delays!
On me one ray forever gleams . . .
I go to where it sweetly dreams.

Through days and nights my sick heart
longs

As longs a loved one to her star.

My dreams came true; I heard the songs,
The sweetest songs of Spain's guitar.

"Pray, stranger, where ah, where thy land?
And who art thou, and what thy name?"

I come from Terra's other hand
Good Maid,—no country is my claim.

Alone, for years, ah, years of time,
Alone, I did my hope pursue
Until it rested in your clime,
Until it showed me Spain, the true.

My home and dear ones long ago
My heart forsook and will forsake
To dwell where blissful echoes flow
In gayly tones,—until I wake.

If thou wilt harken to my tale,
I shall unclothe a friendly heart,
That throbs near thee in this green vale,
Ere thou and I fore'er will part.

I know a vale, though not as green,
And where one only streamlet flows
'Neath shrubs and giant elms between,
And hums its song that no one knows.

On one sweet elm that knew less years
Than any elm in that calm vale,
There grows a heart whose throbs, mehears,
Are singing, sighing their sad wail.

Another heart I carved near mine;
It was the heart of Mary dear.
Two loving hearts above a line
Of Vega's verse—about a tear.

It was a warm and cheery morn.
The skies were brilliant as today.
The clouds were bright, of danger shorn,
—All nature laughed, the least to say.

Our hearts were carved, (one ne'er to fade)
As well as human art allows.
Maria then, good Spanish Maid,
Pronounced to me her love's dear vows.

Ah, then she seemed to me so dear!
Her eyes were filled with such pure bliss!
I kissed her lips with that boy's fear,
—It was our first, our love's first kiss . . .

Her heart, I knew, youthful and pure;
Through faltering lips she spoke her love.
Maria ever sweet, demure,
Would seem to thee the purest dove.

Autumn Leaves

But fate decreed;—we lived not long,
Though love fore'er. Her weakened heart
Too deeply loved, too deep its song:
—Her heart was bleeding with Love's dart.

The days of school were soon returned.
—And we were young, Mary and I.
But in our days, all, all we learned,
Was love and music, poesy . . .

We studied long from one old book,
And sat together in th' village school.
Our other school was one calm nook,
Where flowed a streamlet pure and cool.

Sweet summer passed; and autumn's threnes
Came softly flowing through the lane
That led us both through mystic scenes
Of golden leaves that throbbed in vain.

Oh, years of morns and years of eves
Did silent come and silent wane,
As o'er Spring's shades and Autumn's leaves
We walked to school again, again.

One Autumn came—sweetest of all!
The winds were warm; the skies were clear;
The falling leaves did dancing fall,
As if they danced their dance of cheer.

Mary and I, when school was o'er,
Traversed the lane we knew so well.
The winds commenced the leaves to pour,
—At Mary's feet they bowing fell.

But she was silent, Mary dear;
And spoke but little on the way.
Her only thought was one sad fear,
—To where the leaves for winter stray . . .

I often gazed into her eyes—
A mystic pall, a shadowy veil
As often viewed on midnight skies
Hath seemed to make her starlets pale.

Her cheeks were bloodless, pale and ghast;
Her lips were quivering like a leaf;
My arms she held as if the last,
Bright moments were to pass for grief.

She looked into my anxious eyes,
And asked, dear Mary, my own heart:
“Do tell me, dear, do yonder skies
Receive these leaves when we depart?

Does God embrace them with His love,
As He embraces all the world?
The butterfly, the bee and turtle dove,
The rose that out by man is hurled?

They seem alone cast o'er the lane,
They shiver like the twinklers bright,
As if they longed to feel again
The love of friends on the elm's height."

That night was chilly, drear and cold,
Hence near the embers' dying flames,
Maria listened as I told
Her of bold nights and fairfaced dames,

Whose songs once cheered the castle walls,
And how they watched their lovers bold
To see which wins,—and whose horse falls
Beneath his en'mies' deathly hold.

She listened holding fast my hand,
And asked me, where, ah, where are they . . .
The dancing flame she watched and scanned
As if there played the horsemen's fray.

"Ah, where are they, those knights of Old;
The lovers bold and ladies shy . . .
The knights and warriors brave and bold,
Who loved so well, who loved to—die?"

Maria's mother, aged, gray,
Replied with tears, sweet, longing tears:
"They are fore'er far, far away,
Where Life for them has nought of fears.

They gave their lives as real love gives;
All, all from Life to glowing hearth—
They live there where your father lives,
To pray for those they loved on earth.

They gave their lives as only gives
True love for those whom they adored;
They died with hope that He forgives,
Who has to them His graces poured.

Fair dame has lost her warrior bold.
Her locks are silvered, weak her gait;
Yet pines her heart as't pined of Old—
For him she loves her heart will wait."

Maria's mother dried her tears,
And soon smiles shone bright in her eyes,
As oft a cloudy heaven clears,
Pursued by hopeful, sunclad skies.

'Twas late that night when I returned
Unto the villa's southern end.
My eyes were wet, my brain then burned,
And pain my soul then seemed to rend.

I could not sleep,—oh, how I sought
One single moment to forget!
It was a bitter,—pleasant thought,
Tho't filled my soul with deep regret . . .

When Mary's mother's heart did pine
For those who longed for dear ones lost,
Maria pressed her hand in mine;
I looked at her,—our eyes then crossed!

Sad Autumn passed.—We walked no more
The lane that knew our songs so well.
Her voice its songs now sings no more;
It lives no more its love to tell . . .

I cannot weep; my tears I gave
To save the heart that I adore.
They buried Mary in her grave;
Maria—dead—forevermore!

How oft I wept God only knows,
And weeping prayed o'er Mary's heart.
I knelt and wept in Winter snows;
I loved Maria, my own heart!

She also loved, aye, loved too well.
Her tender heart could not Love's breath
Survive and—bled itself to death;
And thus Love's victim Mary fell.

Ah, when above her throbbless heart,
I knelt in tears and one grave fear,
I kissed her lips ere we did part,
And moaned: it was our God, my dear.

Few weeks have passed; I wept alone.
Near Mary's stone I placed another.
A frozen, pallid cross of stone—
This was my love for Mary's mother.

The aged lady longed to see
Her knight that died for her in war;
A warrior bold there longed to be
With his fair lady evermore . . .

Many sad years have waned and fled
To where my Mary longs for me.
A star my dreams forever led
From her to my heart blissfully.

That star was Mary, all mine own!
My star of Hope and Faith and Love;
She led me here to Spain alone,
From her bright throne from far above.

The country school, the woodland nook
No more saw Mary, our queen.
Forever closed remained the book;
And ghastr became the once bright scene.

The lane no more is cheered by songs
That came from hearts with love replete.
Its blissful hope to Past belongs;
—The blissful memory and sweet.

Autumn Leaves

I wept at morn, I wept till night,
In that cool nook down by the stream.
The fallen elm,—ah, dear the sight,
And like the sun to me doth gleam.

For there my Mary, she and I
Spoke long and true of what would be,
If hearts knew not Love's poesy—
On that dear fallen elmwood tree . . .

I wept there long and dreamed, ah, there,
Where autumn winds still softly blow
O'er Mary's grave, the blooming, fair,
—The love of Don Rosario.

Once in the night in my sweet dreams,
She came to cheer my aching soul:
"Death is not death, it only seems.
Death is for life the bitter toll.

I live and long to be with thee,
As fresh as Spring's first breaking leaf.
Oh come, dear one, oh, come to me,
To soothe fore'er thy heart's sad grief."

That day, ere Dawn's first beaming shown,
I kissed her cross as oft ago.
Beneath her name I traced my own:
—THY DON ROSARIO—

"Oh, come, dear one, oh, come to me!"
Oh, pray'rful words whose memory
Did lead my soul eternally,
Until it lead me unto thee . . .

In thy good land, fair Spanish Maid,
I know I've found a happy rest.
Though far away Mary is laid,
Thy music cheers my sorrowing breast.

I beg thee, Maid, oh, strike the strain
That haunts me still within my dreams;
My dreams of love, my dreams of Spain—
Thy face beknown unto me seems . . .

Weep not, I wished not to arouse
The precious tears that fill thine eyes.
Thy stranger-friend before thee bows,
Forgive him, Friend, ere his heart dies.

A flood of tears, a bitter brine
I wept for Mary, my fair Maid.
Her face that looks like unto thine,
I love in thee,—my fair Maid.

Weep not, I beg thee, Spanish Maid,
Be of good cheer—
"Thy tale, my friend,
Is like a poignant, merc'less blade
That seems in twain my breast to rend!

I weep my tears, I weep fore'er,
Though not for her that is thine own.
Though unto thee she is all fair,
I weep for thee, for thee alone.

Above us sleep the ruins old,
Moss covered, old, bold walls of gold;
Alhambra's walls, its silent halls,
Now sleep beneath dark, graying palls.

The hoary castle is no more
Bright with the beauties of the land.
No harps, no voices live to pour
The glory cast down 'neath this sand . . .

Now harken, friend, while my heart yearns
To be with thee on that dear lane,
And while a pang my soul now burns,
I strike the sweetest song of Spain.

.

Weep not, sad heart, mine is the song
That haunts not only cheerful Spain.
My song was born Love's hearts among,
And lives to cheer them once again.

Weep not—"

Oh, Spanish Maiden sweet!
Thou hast at last struck my heart's pang.
Though thou did'st sing my heart to greet,
Still, 'twas, methinks, thy soul that sang.

My soul once more walked o'er the lane
That led us both to th' village school.
I dreamed that she and I again,
Did read and chat near that clear pool,

O'er which did stretch the old elm tree,
That bore the form of Mary dear.
I saw the stream that humming free,
Did once reflect her eyes so clear.

I heard the bluebird happy, gay,
That hid o'er us to spy and hear
What we did whisper all the day,
And then would chirp his air of cheer.

I saw the elm whose bark two hearts
Once bore, but now it bears but one.
I dreamed I kissed her who departs
To live with God within the sun.

I heard the village chapel's bell,
That rang one morn unto the air,
Of one that lived and loved too well,
And thus did fall Love's victim fair.

But,—Maiden dear of Mary's mien,
Of Mary's smile and Mary's eye,
How did'st thou break the mistful screen
Of Past that knew but she and I? . . .

How did'st thou know Maria's flow'r;
The fragrant lily of the vale?
Thou did'st not see our Fav'rite bow'r,
Where oft we told a merry tale.

How did'st thou guess my namesake,
Friend?

I heard thee sigh it with a tear.
Thou know'st me not, my Spanish Friend,
How is all unto thee so clear? . . .

Art thou her soul? . . .

 "'Tis late, my friend;
The shades of Night are falling low.
I must depart . . . "

 Farewell, then, Friend,
One moment more and then I go.

The soulful music of thy land
Has cheered a soul, a weary heart.
"Oh, let me grasp thy quivering hand,
Friend, and then fore'er we part . . .

Thou hast obeyed Maria's call,
That came from her heart unto thee.
Thy love is strong; it did not fall.
—There sweetly blooms her memory.

I go where sweeter melodies
Relume my soul with memories
Of him I love, for whom I long,
Until we sing the self same song.

Farewell now, friend, but ere I go,
Receive Love's sigh unto thee blown.
Weep not, my Don Rosario,
—I am Maria, still thine own.

Thy love of old—one sweetly kiss;
I kiss thy lips—I kiss thy tears.
When wilt thou come to me, to bliss?
My heart has longed for many years.

I pine and sigh and long for thee,
Until we meet down by Love's shore;
Until thou shalt come to greet me,
To live and love forevermore."

Oh, love, stay but one moment more!
Thou . . . gone, Mary; I see thee wane . . .
Of thee I dream as oft before,
Until we meet,—my Dream of Spain!

'Tis dawn. Under my fading light,
I see thee smile thy smile of Spain,
That knowing not the gloom of Night,
Shall never faint and never wane!

THE FARMER

And the old farmer, with his hand
On the plow, and his eye on the land,
Saw the sun set, and the stars came out,
And the night was dark and cold.

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On the plow, and his eye on the land,
Saw the sun set, and the stars came out,
And the night was dark and cold.

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